

**Name of Organization**

Ochsner Health System

**Healthcare Organization Type**

Health System

**Client Since**

2008

**Products**

Risk

**Key Challenges**

- Lag in data lead to incomplete & inaccurate dashboard metrics
- Inconsistent reporting across sites
- 6-week timeframe for implementation

**Key Benefits**

- 20-50% increase in reported occurrences
- Safety culture now a priority at all sites and across all organizational levels
- Real-time tracking for falls and pressure ulcers

**Client Website**

[www.ochsner.org](http://www.ochsner.org)

**CLIENT CASE STUDY**

## Ochsner Health System

### Rapid cycle implementation: How Ochsner executed Risk in just 6 weeks

**The Challenge**

Following Hurricane Katrina, Ochsner Health System acquired several local for-profit hospitals into its network. Along with these new hospitals came different cultures for reporting and defining occurrences (i.e., how to classify harm, what's a pressure ulcer, etc.). Some sites weren't reporting any patient safety incidents for fear of admitting mistakes. Ochsner spent a lot of time in 2007 standardizing reporting across its sites, ensuring that the dashboard data presented at quarterly review meetings to senior leadership compared like-to-like.

However, the information was never complete because of a lag in reporting data. Ochsner's Jefferson Highway campus facility had an electronic reporting system but staff found it time-consuming and difficult to use. Moreover, 4 out of 5 facilities were still using paper to report incidents with extremely low reporting levels. To overcome this frustrating lack of data, Ochsner decided to purchase a new patient safety reporting system. Ultimately, Ochsner chose Risk from RL Solutions due to its cost and ease-of-use.

Unfortunately, when Ochsner gave notice to its existing software vendor, the company decided to suspend service in just 6 weeks. Therefore, Ochsner had to implement Risk quickly, which they managed in three phases: communication, implementation and training.





### Organizational Snapshot

Ochsner Health System is an academic, not-for-profit medical center that includes seven hospitals and over 35 health centers spread throughout Southeast Louisiana. Ochsner employs more than 11,000 people, including over 600 doctors in 80 specialties, making it the largest multi-specialty group practice in the region. Ochsner is also a national leader in medical research with 300 ongoing research trials and 200 annual publications in medical literature.

### Communication: “8 Times, 8 Ways”

Ochsner’s internal communications mantra is “8 times, 8 ways”. That means that any time it has to communicate a message, Ochsner does it at least 8 times in at least 8 different ways to make sure everyone hears and understands the message. The following 8 ways were used to get the message out about the new occurrence reporting system:

1. System-wide teaser campaign, including a naming contest for the new system
2. Announcements at meetings throughout all levels of the organization

3. Daily newsletters
4. Emails
5. Mailbox inserts with quizzes
6. Website announcements on multiple pages
7. Computer learning modules (not for training but to provide overview of system)
8. In-depth webinars with quality departments

### Implementation: Do It Once & Do It Right

Now that everyone was aware of the system, it was time to implement it. Ochsner’s quality team sat down with RL Solutions to learn how to customize Risk to fit its workflow. Soon after, they

sat down with the designated ‘SuperAdmins’ at Ochsner’s Jefferson Highway campus (its largest facility) to train them on the system. These SuperAdmins were the ones that performed the actual customization and subsequently trained the rest of the staff at Ochsner.

Once Ochsner successfully implemented Risk at its Jefferson Highway campus, the team used that model to sketch out a phased implementation at the other sites. This was made easier by Ochsner’s smart decision to use just one database for the entire system. First, the implementation team held rapid cycle meetings with key departments (geriatrics, pharmacy, etc.) to complete pre-work in anticipation of customization. This included designing constraints and standardizing reporting & definitions of occurrences.

Due to the tight timeline, the team limited the number of customizations and focused on the getting the dashboard metrics right, namely medication/fluid errors, pressure ulcers and falls. Risk’s user-friendly interface meant that Ochsner’s greatly reduced the time it took its staff to fill out an occurrence report. Because of this, Ochsner has seen a 20% increase in reported occurrences across the system compared to last year. Even better, there is a 50% increase in reported occurrences at the Jefferson Highway campus hospital.

#### **Training: Just-in-Time Delivery**

At each of the system facilities, Ochsner rapid cycled each implementation, overlapping cycles to get all of the sites up-and-running quickly. Each one-month cycle consisted of:

- Initial planning meeting to establish a ‘go live’ date
- Work-back schedule based on a ‘go live’ date to determine a training schedule, including in-person training for SuperAdmins one week prior to ‘go live’
- ‘Search and destroy’ mission for paper occurrence form

Subsequently, the SuperAdmins followed a

“No matter how quickly we reported the data or how much we collected, we just kept hearing ‘more more, faster faster’. Risk helped us get there.”

**Donna Saxton, MHA, MPH, FACHE, Vice President of Quality and Safety**  
Ochsner Health System

standardized training agenda to train their own staff. The quality team also developed a resource page on Ochsner’s intranet for self-training, which reduced the strain on its internal resources.

#### **Next Steps: Moving Beyond the Dashboard**

Currently, Ochsner system hospitals use an accurate and complete quality dashboard at monthly and quarterly review meetings. Senior leadership discussion has moved away from debating data validity onto ongoing initiatives to improve patient safety.

Explains Saxton, “The focus has shifted from questioning the accuracy of the data to improving patient safety. The question I’m asked most often now is ‘What are you doing to improve the data?’ ”

The most notable way Ochsner is using Risk is real-time tracking for falls and pressure ulcers. Risk sends an auto-report with data on falls and pressure ulcers every Monday morning to mid-level managers, helping them prepare for a weekly conference call. This culture of accountability is huge shift for Ochsner and is supported at all levels of the organization. Ochsner is on a quest to remove defects in its system to become a highly reliable healthcare organization – and Risk is there to help.

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Want to know more?



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